

SRIMADBHAGAVADGITA

**Summary on
Sixth Chapter**

by

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SUMMARY (SIXTH CHAPTER)

- Note: 1. Portions in brackets are supplied ideas.
2. Numbers in brackets indicate the verses.

Lord *Kṛṣṇa* introduced the topic of meditation towards the end of the last chapter. Being an important topic, *Kṛṣṇa* spends almost the whole of this chapter dealing with meditation. [Here, meditation is upon the Lord as the very Self (*Ātmā*) of the mediator. This is meant to assimilate the Self-knowledge gained from the *guru*'s teaching. The conditioning that "I am the body" will go only with the assimilation of the Self-knowledge. Assimilated Self-knowledge alone can express as *ānanda*.]

Kṛṣṇa talks about five important topics on meditation. They are:

1. *Bahiraṅga-sādhana* — Those disciplines to be followed throughout daily life which influence one's meditation.
2. *Antaraṅga-sādhana* — Those disciplines to be followed immediately before meditation.
3. *Dhyāna-svarūpam* — Nature of meditation.
4. *Dhyāna-phalam* — Result of meditation.
5. *Dhyāna-pratibandhaparihārau* — Obstacle and remedy.

BAHIRAṅGA-SĀDHANĀ

At the outset, the Lord indicates the role of *karmayoga* in meditation by praising the *karmayogī* (1, 2). *Karmayoga*, being a conscious way of life, helps one in getting self-control. It converts an extrovert mind into a contemplative mind. Once this is achieved, one should try to lead a quieter life, because active life becomes an obstacle to meditation (3). Total detachment is the characteristic of a contemplative mind (4).

Incidentally, *Kṛṣṇa* highlights two important values viz. self-confidence and self-control. One who lacks these two finds himself to be an obstacle for any pursuit. On the other hand, one who enjoys the

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above two virtues finds himself to be a supporting force in every field (5, 6). Soon he is established in the vision of the *Ātmā*, the vision of equality (7 to 9).

Kṛṣṇa mentions a few other disciplines also like moderation in eating, sleeping, working, and resting (16, 17).

ANTARAṄGA-SĀDHANĀ

The meditator has to choose a secluded, undisturbed place for meditation (10). In that spiritually and physically pure place, he has to fix the seat which is neither too high nor too low, neither too soft nor too hard (11). Holding the body, neck, and head erect, he has to fix the sight on the tip of his nose, as it were (i.e. the eyes are half-closed) (13). Next, the meditator should withdraw the mind and sense organs from all other activities. The breathing also should be maintained even (refer V-27). With a calm, withdrawn, undisturbed, tension-free, and one-pointed mind, the meditator should meditate upon the Lord, the *Ātmā* (12, 14).

DHYĀNA-SVARŪPAM AND PHALAM

Meditation is nothing but abidance of the withdrawn mind in the *Ātmā* (18). Having given up all desires and having restrained the senses through the mind, one should gradually bring back the mind with the help of the discriminative intellect, step by step. Once the mind is made to abide in the *Ātmā*, there should be no other thought (25). Though the mind may get distracted, one has to bring it back from the respective fields to one's own *Ātmā* (26).

(All this presupposes a clear understanding of *Vedānta*. Everything including thoughts is an object of the *Ātmā*, the Awareness. The *Ātmā* is not an object for me to be thought of, or to be experienced. It is the very "I". Thus, to knock of all expectations and struggles and to abide as the *Ātmā* with the knowledge that "I am the *Ātmā*" is true meditation.)

Thus, constantly abiding in the *Ātmā*, the meditator comes to enjoy permanent peace which culminates in the attainment of

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liberation (*videhamukti*) (15). He enjoys an ever-abiding mind which is completely satisfied with the discovery of the *Ātmā* (20). Since his *ānanda* is not sensual, it transcends all the limits. Having discovered this inner fullness, he never loses sight of his true nature (21, 27, 28). Neither does he consider any other gain to be superior, nor is he shaken by even the greatest loss (22). This infinite *ānanda* will never be lost because this was never gained. It was veiled by the false notion that "I am sorrowful". Once this is removed, the inner *ānanda* becomes evident. Thus, this is more a dissociation from sorrow rather than association (23). (This alone is known as *jīvanmukti*.) Seeing the *Ātmā* in all beings and all beings in the *Ātmā*, he gets established in the vision of equality (29). This vision of the *Ātmā* alone is the vision of the Lord, because the *Ātmā* is not different from the Lord. Thus the meditator is ever established in the Lord in spite of his activities (30, 31). Being established in the *Ātmā*, he looks at all bodies including his body with the same attitude of detachment. Hence he is free from selfishness and is spontaneously established in *dharma*. He is a saint (32).

DIIYĀNA-PRATIBANDHAPARIHĀRAU

Now, *Arjuna* puts a question regarding an obstacle to meditation. It is the problem of mental restlessness or extrovertedness. Because of this, one finds it difficult to meditate and assimilate the Self-knowledge. This frustrates *Arjuna's* mind and he asks for a solution (33, 34).

Kṛṣṇa gives two methods to solve this problem. They are detachment and practice. When the mind is extrovert because of desires, one has to remove it by seeing the futility of desires and their fulfillment. This is detachment. Even a detached mind can be restless because of past habits. This has to be gradually removed by consistent practice alone. Thus, mental discipline requires determination and patience (35, 36).

Still, *Arjuna* feels diffident and he, somehow, thinks that liberation is not possible in one life. He desperately asks *Kṛṣṇa* — "What happens

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to that seeker who has fallen from meditation? Does he not perish like a scattered cloud?" (*Arjuna* feels that the meditator has no *puṇya*, because he has not done any *karma*. He has failed to achieve liberation also. Thus being deceived of *puṇya* and *mokṣa*, he must face an unfortunate future, according to *Arjuna*.) Not being able to accept this, *Arjuna* surrenders to *Kṛṣṇa* seeking clarification (37 to 39).

Kṛṣṇa consoles *Arjuna* by asserting that a spiritual seeker can never have a bad lot (40). The very meditation is a *puṇyakarma* capable of giving heaven and later an ideal birth for the continuation of the spiritual pursuit. The *yogabhraṣṭa* (one who has fallen from the path of spirituality) is reborn in a cultured, prosperous family, or may be, even in the family of a saint (41, 42).

Having got such a birth, he gets associated with the previous wisdom at a very early age (43). Irresistably drawn by the past habits (*saṃskāras*), he finds his spiritual urge suddenly growing from a small flame to a huge conflagration (44). Committing his entire life to the spiritual pursuit and supported by the *saṃskāras* of all the previous lives, he effortlessly fulfils his mission of life (45).

Kṛṣṇa concludes this chapter by praising the meditator in general (46) and praising the meditator of *Kṛṣṇa-paramātmā* (*Brahmātmā*) in particular.

Thus the sixth chapter discusses the following topics:

1. *Bahiraṅga-sādhana*.....1 to 9, 16, 17
2. *Antaraṅga-sādhana*.....10 to 15
3. *Dhyāna-svarūpam and dhyāna-phalam*.....18 to 32
4. *Dhyāna-pratibanda and parihāra* 33 to 36
5. *Yogabhraṣṭa*37 to 45
6. *Yogistuti* (Praise of the yogī)..... 46, 47

Since the main topic here is meditation, this chapter is called *Dhyāna-yoga* or *Ātmasaṃyama-yoga* (mastery of the mind).
